

REMARKS

This Amendment, filed in reply to the Office Action dated February 21, 2007, is believed to be fully responsive to each point of rejection raised therein. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration on the merits is respectfully requested.

I. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-3, 7-10, 13-23, 26-28, 32-35, 38-40 and 47-56 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kano et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,329,513).

II. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 4-6, 11, 12, 24-25, 29-31, 36, 37, 41-46 and 57 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kano et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,329,513) in view of Mori (U.S. Patent No. 4,858,129).

Claims 58-63 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kano et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,329,513) in view of Graeff (U.S. Patent No. 4,736,398).

Applicant respectfully submits that the prior art rejections are not supportable for at least the following reasons. The discussion of the patentability of the base independent claims 1 and 26 will be described after explaining more particularly the patentability of dependent subject matter which has not been previously stated.

Dependent claim 2 describes two or more interimage processed images are arranged in a display so that structurally characteristic parts of the interimage processed images are aligned. The rejection is not supported for at least two reasons. First, in the rejection of base claim 1, the Examiner indicated that the interimage processed images corresponded to the subtraction images. Office action at page 3, citing Col. 14, lines 17-26. The Examiner cites col. 3, lines 7-11 and the Abstract to teach alignment of such interimage-processed images. However, the cited portions

do not relate to subtraction images, which were the purported interimage-processed images.

Rather, the cited portions relate to images prior to subtraction, or prior to interimage processing as defined by the Examiner. Therefore, dependent claim 2 is patentable for at least this reason.

Second, the cited portions relate to a registration process. At best, the registration produces only one interimage-processed image between a reference image and the warped image. Claim 2 describes display of at least two interimage processed images in structural alignment. Therefore, claim 2 is patentable for at least this reason.

As a related matter, inter-processed images are generated by inter-image processing on two original images. Kano does not disclose two or more inter-processed images to be arranged or switched and displayed. Kano only discloses the method of performing inter-images processing (subtraction processing) on two original images, of which common parts are matched. Thus, Kano does not disclose displaying two or more inter-processed images (subtraction processed images), of which structurally characteristic parts common to two or more images to be displayed are matched.

Dependent claim 3 describes two or more inter-image processed images arranged so that structurally characteristic parts of the interimage-processed images are registered. The Examiner cites col. 5, lines 1-12 to teach this feature. However, the cited portion relates to registration of only one pair of interimage processed data. Therefore, claim 3 is patentable for the reasons discussed above for claim 2. Claims 27-28 are patentable based on analogous recitation.

With regard to dependent claim 11, the Examiner acknowledges that Kano fails to teach acquisition of images in a time series manner and using as a reference image the newest or oldest image in time series. The Examiner cites Mori, col. 3, lines 48-55 to correct the deficiency. To the extent that the Mori displays a most recent image, Mori does not teach using this image as a

reference image for interimage processing. Mori does not interimage process any of its images but only displays a sequence of temporally spaced images. The Examiner's proffered motivation to combine Kano and Mori also does not support the rejection. The Examiner contends that increased speed and continuity would be a reason to combine Kano and Mori. However, the interimage processes of Kano would decrease speed and continuity of display due to the time lag necessary to perform the region of interest location, warping and subtraction of Kano. Therefore, claim 11 is patentable for at least these reasons. Claims 12, 36 and 57 are patentable for analogous reasons.

Referring back to the independent claims 1 and 26, the Examiner maintains the same basis for rejecting the claims and offers a single point in rebuttal. The Examiner contends that during prosecution, the claim terms may be given their broadest reasonable construction. However, the Examiner's rebuttal does not identify how Kano teaches selection of two original images from three or more original images as described in each of the independent claims 1 and 26. Fig. 1B, elements 10, 20 cited by the Examiner only shows processing of two images. There is no selection of these two original images from three or more original images.

The Examiner's further reliance on element 130 (Fig. 11B) of Kano to teach selection from three or more original images (Office Action, page 3, paragraph 5) also does not support the rejection. The cited element 130 comprises a region of interest selector. The region of interest selector selects parts from a single image. See col. 12, lines 44-47; col. 13, lines 17-19. Therefore, the inclusion of the region of interest selector 130 also does not teach selection of two original images of three or more original images. It is clear that the region of interest determination is a subarea of each of two original images. Therefore, the regions of interest

selected is not selection from three original images but only a selection from two original images. Therefore, claims 1 and 26 are patentable.

The remaining claims are patentable based on their dependency. The additional references of Mori and Graeff do not make up for the deficiencies of Kano.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

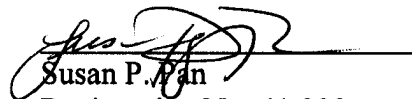
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